

The Washington Merry-Go-Round

Condon Had Hand in Glenn's Feat

By Drew Pearson

It's a great day for Colonel Glenn and his family and the people of the United States as they celebrate in the Nation's Capital today.

But it's also a great day for an almost forgotten professor in St. Louis who left the Government after he was hounded by then Congressman Richard Nixon and the Un-American Activities Committee. The professor, Edward U. Condon, now sitting in St. Louis without headlines, contributed one of the most important ingredients to Colonel Glenn's success—the heat-resistant nose cone.



Pearson

In 1954 the Navy was trying to find a heat-resistant substance for its missile space capsules which would withstand the tremendous heat generated when they re-enter the earth's atmosphere. Glenn's Mercury capsule generated 3000 degrees Fahrenheit last week.

So the Navy in June '54 asked Condon of Corning Glass to go to work. Condon had been director of the Bureau of Standards, but got disgusted with Government witch-hunting and resigned after Nixon went after Mrs. Condon on the charge that she was gossipy and attended a Yugoslav cocktail party.

But in '54 Condon, having resigned from Government, went back to work for the Government, under the auspices of Corning Glass, in developing a heat-resistant nose cone. He succeeded, and in October, 1954, drove the nose

cone down to the Navy to deliver it.

Nixon Says No

But the Navy refused to accept it. For, as a result of a phone call from the Vice President, Condon's security clearance had been removed. Nixon, campaigning in Montana, had read in the paper that Condon had been given a security clearance and telephoned to demand that it be revoked.

Three weeks later the Navy got smart and accepted Condon's new invention. And it was a refinement of this formula for heat-resistant material, first developed by Condon and Corning Glass that went into the Mercury capsule which took Colonel Glenn on his history-making orbit.

Having had his security clearance removed, Condon had to resign from Corning Glass because it was working on Government contracts. Corning loyally stuck by him, but thanks to Nixon's protest he left for Washington University, St. Louis, from where he will be watching on TV the festivities which he helped make possible.

US-USSR Cooperation

American scientists say that the Khrushchev offer of Russian-American space cooperation could lead to great achievements.

Generally they have found Russian scientists quite frank on non-military subjects. The Russians have already exchanged all sorts of important information with American doctors, and even during the U-2 crisis, when Moscow newspapers were blasting the

United States, a delegation of American doctors in Moscow was getting excellent cooperation from Russian doctors on children's diseases.

Last summer when I was in Moscow, I accompanied a group of American and Canadian doctors to the Botkin Hospital, where Russian doctors spent the better part of the day giving the most meticulous and frank explanation of all their work. The American medics said the artificial kidney they had developed was quite new and revolutionary.

This was about 10 days after Khrushchev had made a belligerent speech warning what would happen to the olive groves of Greece and the Acropolis if we got into atomic war.

Easing the Cold War

Commissioner of narcotics Harry Anslinger has paid tribute to Russian support for its vigorous efforts to prevent illegal dope traffic, even when in opposition to their Red Chinese allies who have been the chief opium traders.

Adm. George Dufek, former U. S. Naval commander in the Antarctic, told a group of Washington newsmen how Russian scientists had given him complete cooperation in the Antarctic. He even turned over one American observation post to the Russians to operate.

During my interview with Premier Khrushchev at the Black Sea last summer, I recalled some of this past scientific cooperation and suggested that the United States and Russia ease the cold war by cooperating on a small scale

on projects which could be expanded into major understanding.

Khrushchev is a good listener. He listened carefully. He did not make too much comment, except to say as he departed: "Tell President Kennedy that if the United States and the Soviet stand together, no country in the world can ever start atomic war."

Voice of America

President Kennedy today helps celebrate the most kicked-around but one of the most important agencies of Government — the Voice of America. The Voice has now been telling the world the story of America since Feb. 24, 1942, when it went on the air two months after Pearl Harbor.

Some distinguished personalities have headed or guided the Voice, ranging from Elmer Davis, the first information chief, to Palmer Hoyt of the Denver Post, and Milton Eisenhower, to Edward R. Murrow.

But almost every Congressman has figured he knows more about what the Voice of America should tell the world than its directors, with the result that it has been advised and preached to, harassed and harried, cut and kicked more than any other agency. Its darkest days were during the McCarthy era, when he looked under all its beds for alleged Reds.

Despite all this harassment, however, the Voice has done a surprisingly good job of selling the United States to the world.

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